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INFO CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE 0029  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L GUANGZHOU 000727

STATE FOR EAP/CM AND DRL

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: CHARTER 08 SIGNATORIES DISCUSS FALLOUT, HUMAN RIGHTS

¶1. (U) Classified by Consul General Robert Goldberg for reason 1.4 (d).

¶2. (C) Summary: Charter 08 signatory Ai Xiaoming has not been detained or formally contacted by authorities since publication of the charter, though her home was superficially searched under a public health pretense. The charter only reiterates commitments China has already made -- but not implemented -- in the field of human rights, according to Ai. The government is making an example of Liu Xiaobo, but has not yet interfered with numerous other signatories, including Guo Yan. End summary.

¶3. (C) Professor and documentary filmmaker Ai Xiaoming (protect) disputed media reports that she had been detained following the early December publication of Charter 08, going so far as to chastise a colleague present for not making more of an effort to contact her. (Note: It took Post several days before it was able to contact Ai, a process exacerbated by a recently changed mobile phone number. End note.)

¶4. (C) Ai confirmed media reports that her home had been searched by authorities, who she said posed as health inspectors "looking for mosquitoes." Though they used flashlights to perform a superficial search of her home, Ai said the "inspectors" appeared more interested in Ai's two visiting guests, who were ultimately left undisturbed. Ai speculated that the coincidental timing of her guests' visit and the publication of the charter may have led authorities to believe Ai intended to hold a charterrelated meeting in her home. Though she has not yet been contacted by the government concerning the charter, Ai said she is "still waiting" for the authorities to invite her to "have tea," and discuss her activism.

¶5. (C) Ai said she felt sorry for Liu Xiaobo, who was "being made an example of," and hoped the Liu would soon be released. Ai added that she and a number of other professors had signed a petition imploring the government to release Liu, but had yet to see any effect. Ai stated several times that the Charter 08 presented no unreasonable demands, especially since the Chinese government had agreed to its basic principles ten years earlier by signing several human rights agreements. Ai's close friend and fellow signatory Guo Yan (protect), who said she was followed by authorities to our meeting, said the publication of the charter could potentially be helpful to government officials who otherwise would not have easy access to human rights literature or education.

¶6. (C) Ai noted that she would retire at the end of December, 2008, but would continue to serve as a graduate advisor and periodic instructor at her university. Unconnected to her activism, she is retiring now to take advantage of a pension funded by Sun Yat-sen University; beginning next year, the university will not directly fund new pensions, contributing instead to the government's social security fund. Ai said that her independent filmmaking already requires almost all of her time, and she looks forward to having more time to devote to her projects.

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